

## *From the Editor*

---

### *In This Issue . . .*

A number of authors are beginning to look beyond the conflicts currently raging in Iraq and Afghanistan to ponder the future of the Middle East. Although hamstrung by a myriad of political, economic, and cultural realities, these visionaries share one common view of that future; Iran will play a pivotal role. Foretelling the future of this volatile region requires a pragmatic understanding of the strategies and policies required to meet the demands of what appears to be “never ending” conflict. We are indeed fortunate to showcase three authors in our thematic feature, “War in the Modern Age” willing to offer their presageful views.

Professor Gawdat Bahgat provides readers with “Iran and the United States: The Emerging Security Paradigm in the Middle East.” The author analyzes Tehran’s developing role in not only the Middle East, but the greater west Asia arena. Bahgat believes Iran perceived the removal of regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq as a “mixed blessing.” Iranian leaders are obviously concerned that their country might be next for “regime change,” but are equally relieved that two of the major threats to their national security have been removed. However, the coalition’s failure to quickly establish stable governments in Iraq and Afghanistan has led to what the author calls “the Iranian moment.” Bahgat concludes with a two-fold admonishment to concerned parties: Iran is a crucial player in the Middle East and the international arena. However, if it is to solidify recent strategic gains it needs to reach an accommodation with major Western powers. Likewise, the United States and Europe need to constructively engage Iran.

Brian Reed explores the foundations of network analysis and its relationship to war in “A Social Network Approach to Understanding an Insurgency.” The author’s insightful review of the analytical tools and strategies required to defeat a networked enemy’s array of linked resources leaves little doubt regarding the immediate need to reevaluate America’s military strategy. Reed champions a totally new way of thinking about insurgencies based on a network analysis of the linkages between people, groups, units, and organizations. Using this social network perspective the environment supporting an insurgency is expressed as patterns or irregularities in relationships; the essence of the non-linear organization that characterizes today’s insurgencies. The author closes with a cautionary note that modern insurgency represents an evolved form of warfare that takes advantage of pre-existing and affiliated social, economic, and military networks. A reality that is likely to continue far into the future.

Gary Guertner provides readers with the European view of the policies and actions underpinning the United States’ strategy of preemption. In

“European Views of Preemption in US National Security Strategy” the author uses the doctrines of military primacy, global transformation, preemption, and a willingness to act unilaterally articulated in the 2002 and 2006 *National Security Strategy of the United States* to outline his thesis. The focus of the article is the transatlantic divide over preemption and associated criticism on the part of the European community. The author draws distinctions between various chapters of the documents and the supporting logic to highlight the fact that it is America’s unilateral declaration of when military force might be used against another state that bothers Europeans. Guertner encourages American policymakers and strategists to draw upon European experience in regions where the United States faces threats from Islamic extremists. He concludes that before Western unity can be effective against the varied threats from radical Islam there needs to be some serious bridge-building between the European and American strategic cultures.

“Good Anthropology, Bad History: The Cultural Turn in Studying War” by Patrick Porter is the first of three articles in our thematic presentation, “War in the Modern Age.” The author analyzes the rationale supporting the recent emphasis in US strategy and doctrine of knowing your enemy. He presents cogent arguments supporting the belief that many in today’s military are assuming that different ways of life spawn different ways of war. That this belief is responsible for the misunderstanding that today’s global war on terrorism is merely a clash of profoundly different cultures. Porter cautions that although this new anthropology may have good intentions, this “cultural turn” needs to allow for man’s failure to record or analyze the history of war absent an overly deterministic view. While trying to encourage greater sensitivity to the nuances of culture, the author believes this misreading of history actually encourages an overly simplistic view of warfare, resulting in strategy being replaced by stereotypes. The article makes several cogent arguments: that there has in fact been a cultural turn toward the anthropological approach to war; that classical writings do not support this cultural turn; and when it comes to understanding the actual behaviors of cultures related to war, the cultural turn is unviable. So why does the history of war and culture really matter? The author concludes that the real danger is in falling prey to cultural determinism and lumping disparate cultures together in amorphous groupings; actions that may have dire strategic costs in the future.

Eric Wester returns to the pages of *Parameters* with “Last Resort and Preemption: Using Armed Force as a Moral and Penultimate Choice.” The article argues that using armed force in peace enforcement operations needs to be reserved for a “Last Resort,” in an attempt to preserve the integrity of Just War theory. The author espouses the view that the ethical framework associated with Just War theory provides the appropriate criteria for moral deliberation in the use of military force. The dilemma arises when the doctrine of preemption is introduced to the equation. Wester’s thesis turns on the difficult question faced by

national leaders; “Do we go in or not?” And its equally difficult corollary decision, “Is it right to go in or not?” The author concludes that there is a logical conflict between using armed force as a Last Resort in concert with Just War theory and the current national security doctrine of preemption.

Our final article in this thematic feature is Frank Hoffman’s look at “Neo-Classical Counterinsurgency?” The article attempts to capture the impact and implications of various schools of thought on the new doctrine outlined in the Army/Marine counterinsurgency manual FM 3-24; and evaluate the final product. As a member of the drafting team for the manual the author is more than qualified to make such an assessment. He admits that although the new manual is a positive step in the right direction, it still has room for improvement. Hoffman is concerned with the classicist’s influence in the development of the manual. He highlights the fact that early drafts of the manual were criticized for the emphasis placed on the works of Mao and the principles associated with revolutionary warfare. The author is, however, quite pleased with the new doctrine’s principal theme of “learn and adapt.” Unfortunately, he also believes this theme does not go far enough. Hoffman advocates for a totally new way of thinking about insurgencies. He is especially concerned that the new tactics, doctrines, and philosophies being demonstrated by today’s insurgents are not having enough of an influence on classical COIN. The author concludes that we need to do a great deal more than merely relearn classical COIN; America’s military needs to adapt old doctrine to the new and increasingly complex strategic environment.

The final article in this issue is James Clancy and Chuck Crossett’s “Measuring Effectiveness in Irregular Warfare.” The authors analyze the style of warfare for which the United States military prepared itself following the Vietnam era. Parts of their analysis reveals that the methodologies used for equipment acquisition and operational planning constructs are dangerously biased toward the old force-on-force engagements. The authors call for a new framework for viewing conflict that will integrate evolving measures of success in countering insurgent and terror operations. The article is meant to broaden the considered field of appropriate measures of effectiveness (MOE) related to irregular conflict. Clancy and Crossett do not fall into the trap of predicting what measures will fit all cases, but rather, provide readers with broad examples from which MOEs may be drawn. Their historical review is not meant to pass judgment on any tactic or MOE related to ongoing actions, but rather, to make analysts and strategists aware of new requirements.

*Mea culpa*; in editing Dr. Conrad Crane’s reply to a commentary in our Winter 2006-07 issue, for some unexplainable reason, I inserted the word “waned” in the second paragraph on page 105. A word that many would consider benign. Unfortunately, when describing the penchant for “boldness” displayed by Generals Pershing and MacArthur once they achieved the highest levels of command, it was totally out of context. My apologies to the author and our readers for any confusion I may have caused. — RHT

□